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WOMEN ARTISTS IN CANADA

BY ALEXANDER BLACK.

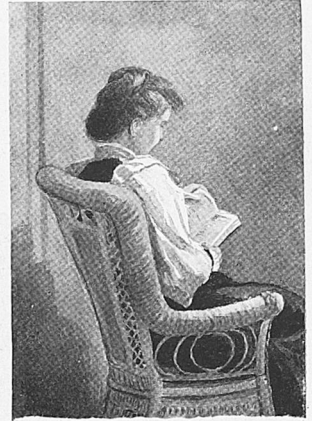
With original illustrations by members of the Woman's Art Association of Canada.



Drawn by
Emily Louise Elliott.
PATIENCE.

THE tendency toward organization which has become so general and so conspicuous during the last few years is quite as characteristic of the arts as of the trades, and it must be admitted that the results of the tendency appear to be beneficial in more than one direction. An artist may choose to look slightly upon the sentiment of association with his fellows, but he cannot afford to despise the practical advantages.

This fact is one that women, perhaps more particularly than men, have seemed to be prompt in taking into account. The associations of women which have sprung into life within the years of this twilight decade, not to go so short a distance backward as the preceding decade, have abundantly justified their own existence. What is true of the United States is probably true of other countries in which the same conditions prevail. Certainly the most important instance offered by our neighbor Canada emphatically supports this view.



Drawn by Edith C. S. Hemming.
A LEISURE HOUR.



After a painting by M. E. Dignam.

IN CLOVER.

The Woman's Art Association of Canada, the first and only national art association of women in that part of our continent, was organized at Toronto in April, 1890, holding its first exhibition in the same month. There had long been an obvious need for an organization of this sort in Canada, and the success of the initial movement left no doubt of the wisdom of the plan, even in the minds of those who wish to be

extremely sure before they go ahead. The women artists of the Dominion had needed a rallying point. The

Royal Canadian Academy and the Ontario Society of Artists are not constituted so as to permit the encouragement of which the women artists as a class felt themselves to be in need. With a view to taking practical steps, Mrs. M. E. Dignam, who had studied at the Art Students' League in New York and afterward at Paris, called together a company of women at Toronto and the Woman's Art Club was organized. Within a short time more than one hundred prominent women had become

patronesses and honorary members. Aid and counsel were given by a number of women artists in the United States, including Mrs. Julia Dillon, Mrs. E. M. Scott,

Mrs. E. L. Coffin, Mrs. C. B. Coman, Mrs. Rhoda Holmes Nichols, Miss Rose Clark, Mrs. Emma Lampert; and the gratifying success of several exhibitions suggested the extension and incorporation of the club. Thus the club became the Woman's Art Association of Canada, and carries with grace and dignity the honor of being an incorporated and a national body.

The Association is supported entirely by members' fees, and the proceeds of



Drawn by Helen Stennett.
THE LANDING-PLACE.



Drawn by M. Ansley Sullivan.
A WHIRL OF COLOR.



Drawn by Ida Mitchell.
OLD FRIENDS.



Q.O.
1891

Drawn by Daisy E. Clarke.

"NO OBJECTIONS TO COLOR."

lectures and exhibitions, the business being transacted at the monthly meeting. An interesting feature of the Association's plan, and one that certainly is to be considered eminently practical, is the providing of studios for the members, with a view to supplying, as far as may be possible, the needs of those who have studied abroad and who wish to keep up their academic training. The classes have been excellently supported, and they have naturally tended to popularize the Association.

The output from this centre of art activity is marked by considerable variety. Portrait painters, landscapists, illustrators, copyists, decorators, all find community of interest in the now flourishing enterprise. The ex-

hibitions show a growing tendency to work by direct methods. Studies from nature out-of-doors become more frequent, and improve in quality. A glance at the accompanying sketches will reveal the earnestness of the work these ambitious Canadian women are doing. The disposition to be faithful is sufficiently apparent to require no comment. The



Drawn by Clara D. Osler.

ON THE HORIZON.



Drawn by M. J. Hemsted.

TWILIGHT GREY.

figure work is simple and effective. Miss van den Broeck's student of destiny in a coffee-cup is a charming figure. The field studies are quite as felicitous in displaying a candid and untheatrical habit in looking at nature.

The Association is young, but full of vitality. Already it has enjoyed the sincerest flattery of imitation. An association



Drawn by Clara D. Osler.

THE DIVIDING LINE.

in Indiana is said to have been organized upon the same lines and another in Ohio is now forming. "For the encourage-

ment of local clubs," says Mrs. Dignam, "we send collections of work to their exhibitions."

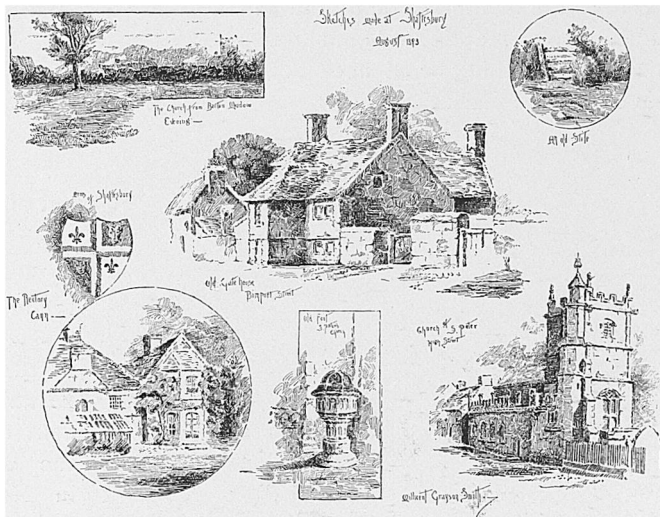
The leaders of the movement are, indeed, eager to establish "a bond of union" among women artists in Canada and to commend themselves to the fellowship of women artists throughout the United States and England. That such a work, even for those who have happened upon "a long felt want," is accompanied by many discouraging difficulties need scarcely be said. But Canada does not seem to be without women who are ready for pioneering in art, and unlikely to be distracted by first successes.

This is all the more notable because the political air of Canada favors that of Great Britain in matters of the fine arts. There is a tendency to look to the Governor-General for support and benefits. Many Canadians have been knighted; why not an artist? But these ladies



From a painting by Clemence van den Broeck.

READING THE FUTURE.

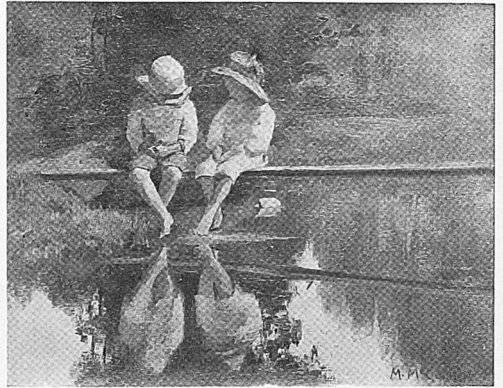


Drawn by Millicent Grayson-Smith.

SHAFTESBURY SKETCHES.

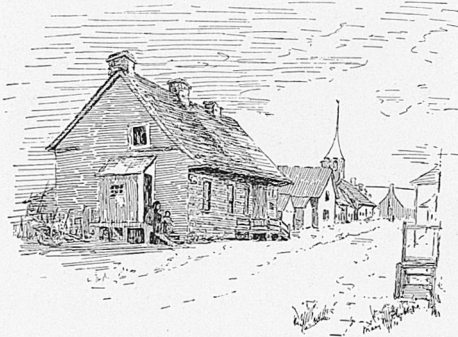
look only to their own energies and bright, capable minds.

A peculiarity of the work of Canadian artists in general is the absence of any appreciable influence upon it of the leading artists of Great Britain. Neither the old Pre-Raphaelites nor the later school of London, which may be called the classical British school; neither the interesting output of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart., newly ennobled, nor the Flemish archæological



From a painting by Mary McConnell.

SEEING DOUBLE.



Drawn by Mary M. Phillips.

STREET OF A CANADIAN VILLAGE.

the same lines as the art of the United States. Examination of the sketches after work by Canadian women in this paper will show that the same is true of the feminine side of the house. English tendency to anecdotic art is not apparent. Whether this is a good thing or ill need not be discussed; it is enough to mark the fact.



Drawn by Anna Gormley.

DOWN THE RAVINE.

school, ably represented in London by Alma Tadema, seem to find much response among our cousins to the northward. French art has had more influence, but, singularly enough, the French population of Canada furnishes hardly any artists. Canadian art seems to be moving exactly on



Drawn by Nina Waldeck.

STUNTED, BUT STURDY.

There was a time when Boston artists were infected by a suspicion that they were not welcome guests at New York Exhibitions; but the acceptance of thousands of pictures, the winning of many prizes in New York, have broken down this imagined grievance. Why should not Canadians try their chances in New York?